



News Release

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Shellfish harvest approval on the horizon for area in Grays Harbor County

OLYMPIA — Improvements to wastewater facilities that flow into Grays Harbor will let the Department of Health upgrade the classification of a shellfish growing area to approved status.

For the past quarter century, more than 14,000 acres in the central bay have been subject to temporary harvest closures due to problems with wastewater collection and treatment systems. The change in classification is expected to become effective in early September.

Improvements to the sewage collection and treatment systems in Aberdeen and Hoquiam have helped make this possible. In recent years, the City of Aberdeen completed multiple upgrades to its wastewater treatment plant, collection system, and pump station monitoring. The Department of Ecology honored Aberdeen with its “Outstanding Wastewater Treatment Plant” award in three of the last five years.

Hoquiam has also upgraded its collection system to manage high flows and separate storm water from sewage. Hoquiam received an “Outstanding Wastewater Treatment Plant” award from Ecology in 2007. Also, Weyerhaeuser Corporation’s pulp and paper mill at Cosmopolis closed in 2006, eliminating contamination from the mill that had closed the bay at other times.

More information on shellfish growing area classification is on the Department of Health [Office of Shellfish and Water Protection’s Web site](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/sf/) (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/sf/>).

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